

Where can I find the text of or information on current legislation?

The best tool for tracking legislation is the Library of Congress website, <http://thomas.loc.gov>.

What's the best way to contact you?

Send me an email! You can visit my website (Buchanan.house.gov) and click the "Email Vern" link on the top right corner of the page. You can also stay in touch with me by signing up to receive my newsletter, which you can do by entering your name and email address in the appropriate spots at the top of my home page.

What is a "session"?

A session is a time when Congress is conducting business in Washington, D.C. There are two regular sessions each Congress – the first beginning in January after a general election, and the second starting the following January. We are currently in the 2nd session of the 111th Congress.

Does your office hire interns?

Yes, we hire interns year-round. Interns in the Florida district offices must be high school age or older. Washington, D.C. interns must be college age or older. Internships are unpaid, but offer a great opportunity to get legislative experience, network, and obtain a first-hand view of how Congress functions on a daily basis. To get information about interning in one of my offices, contact the district office (941-951-6643) or the D.C. office (202-225-5015).

What is a “district work period”?

This is a period of time when Members of Congress are not voting, and leave Washington, D.C. to attend to matters back home. During my district work periods, I take time to meet with constituents and local officials. This time affords me the opportunity to stay in touch with the people I represent and allows me to stay apprised of the needs of my district.

What does a Committee do?

A committee’s main role is to work on legislation and perform oversight on issues within its jurisdiction. Committees do this by holding hearings where witnesses can testify about matters that they feel need the attention of Congress.

How many House Committees are there?

The various House Committees can be found here: <http://house.gov/committees>

What Committee does Rep. Buchanan serve on?

I serve on the powerful Ways and Means Committee, the oldest committee in the House of Representatives.

Who is in charge of committees?

Each committee has a chairman who presides over the committee and comes from the party that currently holds the majority. The ranking member is the committee's top leader from the minority party.

Can I watch Committee hearings?

Many House Committees broadcast their hearings on their websites. You can also watch Committee hearings on C-SPAN. If you ever happen to be in Washington, D.C., many hearings are open to the public, and you are welcome to sit in the audience.

What is a Committee “markup”?

This is when a committee meets to discuss, debate, amend and vote on legislation. After a bill has been “marked up” and voted on by a committee, it can then be sent to the House Floor for consideration by the entire House of Representatives.